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Committee on Conferences
Substantive session
Agenda item 2 (b) (iv)

Cost accounting: notional costs of conference services

Note by the Secretariat

1. At its substantive session of 1997, the Committee on Conferences requested the Secretary-General to report on the notional costs of conference services at the United Nations Offices at Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi.[1] The present document is submitted in compliance with that request. It also includes information on Headquarters, for comparison purposes.

2. The notional costs reported herein cover the cost of reproduction supplies and the cost of the conference services staff directly involved in the provision of the services in question, namely, interpreters, conference officers, documents officers, translators/précis writers, revisers, verbatim reporters, text processors and reproduction and distribution staff. The costs reflect the salaries and the prevailing grades of the staff providing the services in question at each duty station.

3. For all services, except reproduction and distribution, these costs are based on the assumption that the services are provided in all cases by permanent staff during normal working hours, and in accordance with the expected outputs reflected in the workload standards in force, which are the same in all four duty stations. Accordingly, the costs are calculated on the assumption that the permanent staff are fully utilized and that permanent staff capacity matches demand.

4. Costs for reproduction and distribution represent recent historical averages of actual expenditures in staff and supplies per units of output. They reflect prevailing print runs at each location. Reproduction costs for Vienna are based on the unit rate charged by the Common Printing Service of the International Atomic Energy Agency. The rate includes staff and supplies, and also rental, purchase and maintenance costs of equipment.

5. In some duty stations, costs have not been calculated for services which are not provided to bodies usually meeting there, or for services for which no permanent staff are available. It is for that reason that the second part of the table below does not provide

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information on the United Nations Office at Nairobi, where there are no permanent interpretation staff, or on the United Nations offices at Geneva and at Vienna in certain cases.

6. The notional costs calculated as explained above are as follows (in United States dollars):

	New York	*Geneva*	*Vienna*	*Nairobi*
One page of documentation in six languages				
Translation/revision	669	716	610	643
Text processing	221	321	210	72
Reproduction/distribution	121	158	131	132
Total	1 011	1 195	951	847
One hour of meeting time with services as indicated				
(a) Interpretation in six languages and support services	1 685	1 817	1 389	—
(b) (a) plus summary records in three languages	3 251	3 675	—	—
(c) (a) plus summary records in six languages	4 252	4 811	3 796	—
(d) (a) plus verbatim records in six languages	7 153	—	—	—

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 32* (A/52/32/Rev.1), para. 53.